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1. GA IN NEWS

FIRST IN NEWS

S.No	News	Key Facts
1.	**Southeast Asia's 1st Night Sky Sanctuary**	• Will be made in **Hanle in Eastern Ladakh.** • Sanctuary is being set up with the help of **Indian Institute of Astrophysics, Bengaluru** **Do you know?** • A **dark sky preserve (DSP)** is an area, usually surrounding a park or observatory, that restricts artificial light pollution. The purpose of the dark-sky movement is generally to promote astronomy. **Additional Information:** • The **Dark Sky Reserve** will be located at Hanle village in Eastern Ladakh as a part of **Changthang Wildlife Sanctuary**.
2.	**1st regional conference on "Ensuring Access to Quality Legal Aid for the Vulnerable: Challenges and Opportunities in the Global South."**	• **Venue –** New Delhi • **Organized by -** The National Legal Services Authority of India together with the International Legal Foundation, the UNDP, and the UNICEF. • **Objective -** Aimed to address the challenges and opportunities related to ensuring quality legal aid for vulnerable populations in Global South countries. ○ It highlighted the importance of reforming colonial-era laws that perpetuate injustice and inequality
3.	**1st Indian woman to receive the WISE Prize for Education Award**	• **Safeena Hussain, founder of 'Educate Girls.'**
4.	**World's 1st Portable Hospital 'Aarogya Maitri Aid Cube' Unveiled in Gurugram**	• Portable Hospital can be airlifted to disaster areas and assembled in an hour. • The hospital is made up of **72 detachable mini-cubes**, each being a specialized station for emergency response and humanitarian efforts. • It can treat as many as 200 patients. • **Designed** indigenously under **Project BHISHM** (Bharat Health Initiative for Sahyog Hita and Maitri). **Do you know?** • India has already given two Aarogya Maitri Cubes to **Myanmar** as a "goodwill gesture", and one is being prepared for **Sri Lanka**.
5.	**Country's 1st airport to wind up gadgets-in-tray security check system**	• Bengaluru's **Kempegowda International Airport (KIA)** Terminal 2 (T2) ○ It will exempt the need to remove personal electronic devices, such as mobile phones and laptops from their handbags during pre-embarkation security checks. • This exemption will be made possible by the Computer Tomography X-ray (CTX) machine that will be installed at T2.

6.	**World's first brother-sister Grandmasters duo** 	• **R Vaishali** and **R Praggnanandhaa** • R Vaishali became the 3rd female grandmaster from India after she crossed the 2500 FIDE ratings to earn the grandmaster title at the IV **El Llobregat Open** in **Spain**. ○ The other two Female Grandmasters are - **Koneru Humpy** and **Harika Dronavalli** • They also became the first-ever brother-sister duo to make the Candidates, the qualifying event for the **World Championship match**. **Do you know?** • Koneru Humpy was the **World's youngest female player** ever, when she became a GM in 2002, at the age of 15.
7.	**1st railway project between the Northeastern States and Bangladesh**	• **Name -** Agartala-Akhaura railway project • **Implemented by -** The Ministry of Railways through M/s Indian Railway Construction Company Limited (IRCON) • **Funded by -** Ministry of Development of Northeastern Region (MDoNER) • **Objective -** To reconnect Bangladesh and Northeast India through Tripura, enhancing trade, connectivity, and socio-economic development. • Construction of the Bangladesh portion is implemented by Bangladesh Railways and funded by Indian Ministry of External Affairs. • **Nischintapur** in West Tripura will serve as the **international immigration station.** **About The Northeastern Council (NEC):** • It was constituted as a statutory advisory body in 1971 by an Act of Parliament for rapid socio-economic development of North Eastern Region (NER) and functioned as an advisory body till 2002. • The NEC (Amendment) Act, 2002 mandated NEC to function as a regional planning body for North Eastern Region. • Council gives priority to schemes and projects, which benefit two or more States.
8.	**1st Khelo India Para Games** 	• **Venue** – New Delhi (IG Stadium, Shooting Range in Tughlaqabad, and the JLN Stadium) • It will have **7 disciplines** including para-athletics, para shooting, para archery, para football, para-badminton, para table tennis and para weight lifting • **Mascot** – Ujjwala "Sparrow" **Do you know?** • Since 2018, a total of 11 Khelo India Games have been conducted, including 5 Khelo India Youth Games, 3 Khelo India University Games, and 3 Khelo India Winter Games.
9.		• **Venue –** Red Fort, New Delhi • Spearheaded by Ministry of Culture • It is designed to initiate a comprehensive conversation among artists,

	1st Indian Art, Architecture & Design Biennale (IAADB) 2023	architects, designers, photographers, collectors, art professionals, and the public. • It aims to strengthen cultural dialogue and provide opportunities for collaboration in the art, architecture, and design sectors as part of the evolving economy. • In the event the Prime Minister inaugurated the '**Aatmanirbhar Bharat Centre for Design'** and the **student Biennale- Samunnati**, along with launching a **Commemorative Stamp**. • Cultural centers are being established in **5 Indian cities** - **Delhi**, **Kolkata**, **Mumbai**, **Ahmedabad**, and **Varanasi**, to enrich these cities culturally and promote local art. • **Special Tribute**: **Urmila Eulie Chowdhury**, a pioneering Indian woman architect, is being remembered in the IAADB's **Samatva pavilion** in her centenary year. o Curated by experts, each pavilion celebrates different aspects of Indian architecture and design - **Pravesh**, **Bagh-e-Bahar**, **Sampravah**, **Sthapatya**, **Vismaya**, **Deshaj**, and **Samatva**.
		About Aatmanirbhar Bharat Centre for Design: • A platform to promote unique and rare Indian crafts, facilitating collaboration between artisans and designers. • It aims to **empower artisans** with design development and digital marketing skills, contributing to a sustainable cultural economy. **About Student Biennale- Samunnati** • To be held at Lalit Kala Akademi, providing opportunities for students to showcase work, interact with peers and professionals, and participate in design competitions and workshops.
10.	**India's first female Indian Armed Forces officer to serve as Aide-De-Camp (ADC) to the governor of the country.** 	• **Name -** Squadron Leader Manisha Padhi (2015 batch Indian Air Force (IAF) officer) • **Appointed to** Governor of Mizoram, Hari Babu Kambhampati**.** o She was earlier posted at Air Force stations in Bidar, Pune and Bhatinda before her new posting. • In Mizoram, the **2nd ADC** is Zonun Thara, a state police officer. **What is 'Aide-de-Camp' title?** 'Aide-de-camp is an officer in the armed forces who helps an officer of higher rank.' **Do you know?** • The **President** has 5 aides-de-camp. o These 5 aides-de-camp officers include 3 from the Army and 1 each from the Navy and the Air Force. One honorary aide-de-camp from the Territorial Army is also there. • The **service chiefs**, including the chief of the Army, Navy, and Air Staff, usually have 3 aides-de-camp. • The **governors of states** have 2 aides-de-camp, one each from the Indian Armed Forces and the Indian and state police services. o However, in Jammu and Kashmir, both the aides-de-camp to the governor are appointed from the Indian Army.
11.	**'1st Indian citizen' to**	• **Name -** Dr Akshata Krishnamurthy • She is a Principal Investigator and Mission Science Phase Lead at

	operate rover on Mars 	NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory. • The 'rocket scientist' obtained her Masters from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign before pursing a Doctorate at MIT.

GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES

S.No	Initiative	Key Facts
1.	**Floating Compressed Natural Gas (CNG) Mobile Refueling Unit (MRU) stations**	• **Location** - Ravidas Ghat, Varanasi • **Developed by** - GAIL (India) Limited, a Maharatna PSU under the Ministry of Petroleum & Natural Gas • **Objective** - Aim to provide a pollution-free and sustainable energy solution in Varanasi. • Two floating CNG stations are now operational on both sides of the main Ghats of Varanasi. (Namo Ghat and Ravidas Ghat) **Do you know?** • Floating CNG stations help **reduce nitrous oxides (NOx)** and **sulfur oxides (Sox) emissions**, produce less smoke and offer a quieter and more comfortable experience for tourists enjoying boat rides on the Ganges River. **Additional Information:** • **GAIL Utkarsh -** CSR initiative, providing coaching to economically weaker section girls for Engineering and Medical entrance examinations, contributing to education and empowerment.
2.	**'National Best Tourism Village and National Best Rural Homestays Competition 2024** 	• **Launched by -** The Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, in collaboration with the Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management. • **Objective -** Aim to strengthen the promotion and development of Rural Tourism in the country. • The competition was launched on **World Tourism Day** i.e., **27th September 2023** **Do you know?** The earlier version of the **National Best Tourism Village Competition 2023** recognized 35 villages all over India in Gold, Silver, and Bronze categories.
3.	**National Mission for Manuscripts**	• **Launched by -** Ministry of Culture in 2003 • **Objective -** Aim to locate, document, conserve, and promote access to manuscripts across India. It is dedicated to preserving and studying the rich manuscript heritage of the country. **Do you know?** • The **National Electronic Database** created by the Mission contains information on 4 million manuscripts, making it the world's largest database on Indian manuscripts.

4.	**Gajraj System** 	• It is an AI-based Surveillance System to Prevent Elephant Deaths on Railway Tracks. • **Launched by** - Indian Railways • **Objective** - To prevent elephant deaths on railway tracks by alerting loco pilots about the presence of elephants. • The technology has shown **99.5% accuracy** in detecting elephants on tracks. • It utilizes optical fibre cable (OFC) to detect vibrations caused by elephant movement near the rails. The software triggers alerts for any suspicious movement within **200 metres** of the tracks. • It is capable of distinguishing between elephants, other animals, and humans, and identifying the type and number of animals present. **Do you know?** On average, 20 elephants die annually due to train collisions in India, mostly in the Northeast Frontier Railway zone.

SUMMITS AND CONFERENCES

S.No	Focus Area	Key Outcomes
1.	**United Nations Peacekeeping Ministerial Meeting**	• **Venue -** Accra, Ghana • Summit was focused on challenges faced by peacekeepers and the role of women in peacekeeping. **Do you know?** India is a leading troop contributor, having provided over 275,000 troops in 53 missions over seven decades
2.	**Global Partnership on Artificial Intelligence (GPAI) 2023 Summit**	• **Venue -** New Delhi, India • **Organizing Body -** The Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology (MeitY), Government of India, in collaboration with the Centre for Responsible AI (CeRAI), IIT Madras. • **Theme – "**Advancing Responsible AI in Public-Sector Applications" • India became the Chair of GPAI in November 2022 after France. **Additional Information:** • GPAI is a multi-stakeholder initiative aiming to bridge the gap between AI theory and practice. • It was launched in June 2020 with 15 members, GPAI now includes 28 member countries and the European Union.
3.	**Uttarakhand Global Investors Summit 2023**	• **Venue -** Forest Research Institute, Dehradun, Uttarakhand • **Theme -** 'Peace to Prosperity' • **Initiative launched -** Book **'Sashakt Uttarakhand'** and the brand **'House of Himalayas'**.

MOUs AND AGREEMENTS

S.No	Signing Entities	Key Facts
1.	**National Geospatial Programme, Department of Science and Technology (DST)** **National Institute of Geo-informatics Science & Technology (NIGST)** **Survey of India** **IIT Tirupati Navishkār I-Hub Foundation**	• The MoU aims to establish a Centre of Excellence (CoE) for Geospatial Innovation & Research in India. • The CoE will focus on nurturing geospatial technology-based start-ups, industries, and Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs), emphasizing applications with significant economic impact. • This pilot project is intended to address the growing needs for geospatial technology solutions in various sectors of the Indian economy.
2.	**Integrated Defence Staff (HQ IDS)** **and** **Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)**	• **Objective** - To engage in technical collaboration and joint research and development in the field of defence technology. • The MoU provides an umbrella framework for collaborative interactions between CSIR Labs, HQ IDS, and the Indian Armed Forces (Indian Army, Indian Navy, Indian Air Force) for enhancing the scientific understanding and development of defence-related technologies.
3.	**World Bank** **and** **Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis, and Malaria**	• **Objective -** To strengthen health systems in countries of the Global South, aiming for more efficient, effective, and sustainable financing to improve health outcomes, especially in the context of climate change.

4.	**Amazon India**
	and
	Directorate General of Foreign Trade (DGFT), Ministry of Commerce and Industry
		• **Purpose of the MoU**
		  ○ To boost exports from India's MSME sector
		  ○ It will co-organise capacity-building sessions, training and workshops in a phased manner for MSMEs across 75 districts identified under the Districts as Export Hubs initiative outlined in the latest Foreign Trade Policy to export and grow via e-commerce.
		• The 'Districts as Export Hubs' initiative aims to transform each district into an export hub by connecting local producers with global supply chains.
		
		Do you know?
		Amazon Global Selling, Amazon's flagship e-commerce export programme launched in India in 2015, helps lower the entry barrier for Indian MSMEs and entrepreneurs to start or expand their export business using e-commerce.

5.	**NLC India Ltd (NLCIL)**	• **Objective -** To provide job-oriented skill development training to

	And Tamil Nadu Skill Development Corporation (TNSDC) and Nettur Technical Training Foundation (NTTF), Bengaluru	unemployed young people.
6.	**The Ministry of Education All India Football Federation (AIFF)** and **the Sports Authority of India (SAI)**	• **Objective –** To support the Football for Schools' (F4S) programme. • The F4S initiative involves equipping government schools across the country with 11.15 lakh footballs and providing training to students, teachers, and coaches to empower them in the sport. **About Football for Schools' (F4S) programme:** • This ambitious initiative, led by the **Fédération Internationale de Football Association (FIFA)**, aims to implement a nationwide train the trainer programme. • The initiative aims to make football more accessible to both boys and girls worldwide by integrating football activities into the education system.
7.	**Government of India** and **Asian Development Bank (ADB)**	• **Objective -** To improve connectivity and resilience of roads in the state of Madhya Pradesh with a $175 million loan **Do you know?** **ADB:** • Established in 1966 • 68 members as of now, with 49 from the Asia and Pacific region and 19 from other parts of the globe • HQ - Manila, Philippines. • President - Masatsugu Asakawa
8.	**Assam Government and National Dairy Development Board (NDDB)**	• **Objective –** To achieve the holistic development of the dairy sector in Assam. • It also established six mega plants in the state as part of this joint venture

9.	**Department of Ex-Servicemen Welfare, Ministry of Defence (MoD), Government of India and Indian School of Business (ISB)**	• **Objective**
		  ○ To provide scholarships for military personnel returning to civilian life post-retirement.
		  ○ To offer a 50% tuition fee waiver across ISB's postgraduate and advanced management programmes, aiding in the transition of ex-servicemen to civilian professional roles.
		  ○ It aims to provide the latest and in-depth management skills to ex-servicemen, enhancing their skillset.
		• The initiative is expected to benefit **22 ex-servicemen** each academic year, with a total scholarship amount of Rs 2.3 crore annually.

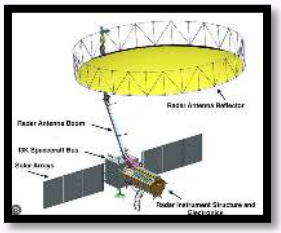
10.		• The MoU is designed **to foster cooperation and information exchange regarding the Clearing Corporation of India Ltd (CCIL)**, a central counterparty (CCP) providing clearing & settlement services in India. • It underscores **cross-border regulatory trust and cooperation**, reflecting a commitment to mutual recognition of regulatory regimes. • **CCIL provides clearing and settlement for transactions** in

	 Reserve Bank of India (RBI) and **Bank of England (BoE)**	government securities, foreign exchange, and money markets, under RBI's regulation. • The MoU follows a **conflict with the European Securities and Markets Authority (ESMA)**, which **withdrew recognition of Indian CCPs**, including **CCIL**, after RBI refused ESMA's supervision. • **CCIL has applied to the BoE for recognition as third-country central counterparty** (TC-CCPs), a **prerequisite for UK-based banks to clear transactions through CCIL.** • **UK-based banks** like **Barclays** and **Standard Chartered** can continue to offer **clearing and settlement facilities** in India.
11.	**Ujjivan Small Finance Bank** (Ujjivan SFB) and **Water.org** UJJIVAN SMALL FINANCE BANK Build a Better Life water.org	• This partnership is **aimed at offering affordable financing solutions for safe water and sanitation to the Indian population**. • Ujjivan SFB is headquartered in Bengaluru, Karnataka. • **Water.org** is global **non-profit organization** dedicated to **providing access to safe water** and **sanitation.** • Ujjivan SFB will offer **WATSAN Category Loans starting from Rs 6,000 to Rs 1, 00,000** to both existing and new customers **for constructing or renovating water and sanitation facilities.** • Partnership **targets providing 65,000 households** with **safe drinking water & hygienic sanitation** facilities over next 3 years. • Water.org to **identify needy areas, providing technical support, market assessment** and **aiding in monitoring and evaluation.** 1. **WATSAN Loan Category:** It is specifically **categorized under the Group Loan segment, designed to create low-cost infrastructure** for addressing challenges of safe drinking water and proper sanitation.

FAIRS AND FESTIVAL

S.No	Name	Key Facts
1.	**Global Ayurveda Festival** 	• **Venue** - Greenfield International Stadium, Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala • **Theme** – "Emerging Challenges in Healthcare and a Resurgent Ayurveda" • **Organized by** - The Centre for Innovation in Science and Social Action (CISSA) in association with the Ministry of Ayush, Government of India; Department of Ayush; Government of Kerala; Ayurveda fraternity
2.	**Hanukkah** 	• **Jewish Festival** • The word Hanukkah means "**dedication**" in Hebrew. • It is celebrated for 8 days and nights, starting on the 25th of the Jewish month of Kislev, which may fall anywhere between late November and early December.

SCIENCE & TECHNOLOGY

S.No	Technology in News	Key Facts
1.	**NASA-ISRO Synthetic Aperture Radar (NISAR)** 	• To be launched in the first quarter of 2024. **About NISAR:** • It is the first radar in space to map Earth systematically. • The satellite will operate for a minimum of 3 years. • It is a Low Earth Orbit (LEO) observatory. • It will map the entire globe in 12 days.
2.	**World's largest single-site solar power plant**	• **Name -** Al Dhafra Solar Photovoltaic Independent Power Project (IPP), UAE • **Capacity –** 2 Gigawatt • It set a record for cost competitiveness. • It was inaugurated ahead of the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP28) in the UAE. **Do you know?** **COP 28** • The Conference of Parties (COP) is the apex decision-making authority of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. • The COP meets every year, unless the Parties decide otherwise. The first COP meeting was held in Berlin, Germany in March, 1995. • **COP 27** was held at Egypt's coastal city of **Sharm el-Sheikh** • **COP 28** is to be held in **UAE** 2023
3.	**World's biggest experimental nuclear fusion reactor launched in Japan**	• **Launched/developed by -** Joint project between the European Union and Japan. • The reactor, known as the **JT-60SA**, aims to explore the feasibility of fusion as a safe, large-scale, and carbon-free energy source. • It is housed in Naka, north of Tokyo, Japan, and is operational. • Fusion technology, different from fission, involves fusing two atomic nuclei. • The reactor is designed with a doughnut-shaped "tokamak" vessel, capable of heating plasma to 200 million degrees celsius. • JT-60SA serves as the precursor to the International Thermonuclear Experimental Reactor (ITER) under construction in France. • The project's goal is to mimic the sun's process of fusing hydrogen nuclei into helium, thus releasing energy.

DEFENCE EXERCISES/ INITIATIVES/ TECHNOLOGY

S.No	Exercise/ Technology	Key Facts
1.	**National Level Pollution Response Exercise**	• **Venue** - Vadinar in the Gulf of Kutch, Gujarat • **Edition** – 9th (8th Edition was Held in Mormugao Harbour, Goa)

	(NATPOLREX-IX)	• **Objective** - Aimed to test the preparedness and coordination of various resource agencies in responding to a marine oil spill, invoking provisions of the National Oil Spill Disaster Contingency Plan (NOSDCP). **About NATPOLREX-IX:** • It is a national-level pollution response exercise aimed at testing preparedness and coordination among resource agencies to respond to a marine oil spill, invoking provisions of the National Oil Spill Disaster Contingency Plan (NOSDCP). **Do you know?** • The Indian Coast Guard serves as the central coordinating authority for oil spill response in Indian water. • 75% of India's energy needs are met through oil imports by sea
2.	**MAHASAGAR** (Maritime Heads for Active Security and Growth for All in the Region)	• **Launched by** - Indian Navy • **Purpose of the Initiative** - Aim to promote high-level virtual interactions **among Maritime Heads** to enhance Active Security And Growth for All in the Region, particularly in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). ○ It aligns with the Indian Government's SAGAR vision, which stands for 'Security and Growth for All in the Region'. • **Theme -** 'Collective Maritime Approach towards Countering Common Challenges' • **Participants included -** Bangladesh, Comoros, Kenya, Madagascar, Maldives, Mauritius, Mozambique, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, and Tanzania. **Do you know?** **SAGAR 'Security and Growth for All in the Region'** • It was a term coined by the Indian Prime Minister in 2015. • It is a maritime initiative which gives priority to the Indian Ocean region for ensuring peace, stability and prosperity of India in the Indian Ocean region.
3.	**Exercise VAJRA PRAHAR** 	• **Edition -** 14th • **Venue -** Umroi Cantonment, Meghalaya • **Participating Countries -** India (Indian Army) and United States • Annual exercise, first conducted in 2010 **Do you know?** • Exercise VAJRA PRAHAR is an annual exercise, first conducted in 2010. • 13th edition was held at the Special Forces Training School in Bakloh, Himachal Pradesh
4.	**Successful training launch of Short-Range Ballistic Missile 'Agni-1'**	• **Venue -** APJ Abdul Kalam Island, Odisha • Training launch, carried out under the aegis of the Strategic Forces Command
5.	**Table-Top Exercise (TTX) for ASEAN Women**	• **Venue -** Manekshaw Centre, New Delhi, India • **Participating Countries/Entities -** Women Officers from the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN)

	Peacekeepers	• **Organizer -** Conducted by the Indian Army's Centre for United Nations Peacekeeping (CUNPK) • **Purpose -** To enhance the capabilities of women military personnel in peacekeeping operations and promote gender inclusivity.

SPORTS

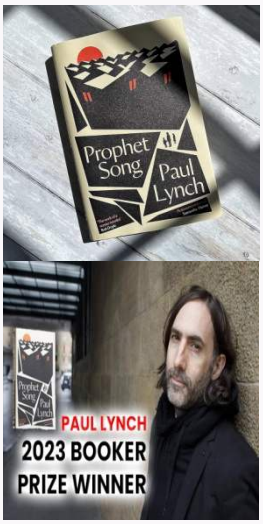
S.No	Sports Event and Venue	Key Facts
1.	**Kalaburagi Open Tennis Tournament** **Venue -** Kalaburagi, Karnataka	• **Winner**: Ramkumar Ramanathan from India. • **Runner Up**: Austrian player David Pichler. • This victory marks Ramkumar Ramanathan's third ITF title in 57 days, showcasing his form and skill on the court.

2.	Davis Cup Finals 2023
	
		• **Italy beat Australia 2-0 in the final.**
		• Italy's **first Davis Cup title since 1976**, ending a 47-year drought.
		• **Jannik Sinner was star player for Italy**. He **won both his singles matches** against Alex de Minaur and Alexei Popyrin in straight sets.
		• **Matteo Arnaldi** was the hero for Italy, **beating Popyrin in a three-set thriller to give Italy the lead in the final.**
		• **Australia** was the **defending champions from 2022**.
		• About Davis Cup Finals:
		  ○ It is an **annual men's tennis tournament** that **features 8 teams competing for the title of world champions.**
		  ○ The **event was first held in 1976** and is considered as the **'World Cup of Tennis.**
		  ○ **Held in a different country each year**, in November or December.
		  ○ The **event consists of two singles matches and a doubles match**, with each tie being decided by a best-of-three format.
		• The **event is played on indoor hard courts** and has total prize money of $8 million.

AWARDS

S.No	Award/Milestone	Key Facts
1.	**The Ministry of Ayush received a Gold Medal**	• **Award Giver** - India Trade Promotion Organization • **Category -** 'Ministries and Departments' • **Event -** Indian International Trade Fair **Do you know?** • The Ministry of Ayush was established on November 2014
2.	**ISSA Vision Zero 2023 Award**	• **Given To -** Employees' State Insurance Corporation (ESIC) • **Given By -** International Social Security Association (ISSA) • **Purpose of Receiving the Award -** Recognizing ESIC's success in outreach in the field of safety and health at workplaces, aligning prevention strategy, and post-accidental care mechanisms. • Award received at the 23rd World Congress on Safety and Health at Work in Sydney, Australia

		About ISSA: • **Founded –** 1927 • **HQ -** at the International Labour Office in Geneva • It promotes dynamic social security worldwide • Its South Asia Liaison Office functions from ESIC headquarters, coordinating with member countries like Bhutan, Iran, Nepal, Sri Lanka, and Pakistan
3.	**Chevalier of the Legion d'Honneur** 	• **Conferred to -** Dr V R Lalithambika, former director, Directorate of the Human Spaceflight Programme of ISRO • **Conferred By –** France • Dr. Lalithambika coordinated with the French National Space Agency (CNES) for the Gaganyaan project **Do you know?** The "**Chevalier de la Legion d'Honneur**" is the highest civilian award given by the **French Republic** for outstanding contribution to the recipient's field of expertise, regardless of their nationality. It was instituted in **1802** by **Napoleon Bonaparte**
4.	**WISE Prize for Education** 	• **Given To:** Safeena Hussain, founder of 'Educate Girls' • **Given By:** Qatar Foundation at the World Innovation Summit for Education (WISE) Summit • Award was given at the **11th Edition** of the **WISE Summit in Doha.** • **Purpose of Receiving the Award:** Recognized for her work in mobilizing 14 lakh out-of-school girls in Indian villages back to mainstream education. • Safeena's initiative 'Educate Girls' targets underprivileged areas in India, including Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Bihar, and Uttar Pradesh and uses AI to identify villages with high numbers of out-of-school girls. • **Safeena Hussain** is the **first Indian woman** and the second Indian to receive this award, following 'Pratham' co-founder Madhav Chavan in 2012. **About the Award:** • The WISE Prize for Education is one of the most prestigious awards in education of worth 5 lakh USD • Established in 2011 by Her Highness Sheikha Moza bin Nasser. • It is the first distinction of its kind to recognize individuals or teams for outstanding, world-class contributions to education.
5.	**PRSI National Award for Outstanding Contributions to Healthcare Communications.**	• **Given To:** Suganthy Sundararaj, Regional Head, Public Relations, Apollo Hospitals. • **Given By:** Public Relations Society of India. • **Purpose of Receiving the Award:** Recognizes her dedication to the communications and public relations industry, particularly in the healthcare domain, and her role in shaping the strategic management of public relations. • Suganthy Sundararaj received the award at the International Public Relations Festival in New Delhi. • **Theme** - G20: Showcasing Indian Values and The Emerging India to the World: Opportunities for Public Relations

6.	**Booker Prize 2023**  	• The 2023 Booker Prize has been **awarded to Prophet Song**, a dystopian novel **authored by Paul Lynch** and published **by Oneworld.** • Other nominees were: The Bee Sting by Paul Murray, Western Lane by Chetna Maroo, This Other Eden by Paul Harding, If I Survive You by Jonathan Escoffery, Study for Obedience by Sarah Bernstein. • **About the Author:** o Lynch is an **Irish author and former film critic** born in Limerick in 1977. o **The book is Lynch's fifth** including "**Beyond the Sea**," "**Grace**," "**The Black Snow**," and "**Red Sky in Morning**." o **Fifth Irish author to win the Booker Prize**, joining the ranks of Iris Murdoch, John Banville, Roddy Doyle, and Anne Enright. • **About Book:** o The story **focuses on Eilish, a microbiologist, whose husband, a union official, is taken by a secret police force** in an alternate Dublin descending into authoritarianism and civil conflict. o Work of fiction **reflecting global realities of war-torn countries.** • **About Booker Prize:** o **Each year**, the prize is **awarded to best sustained work of fiction written in English** and **published in the UK and Ireland.** • The winner **receives £50,000 as well as the £2,500 awarded to each of the six shortlisted authors.**

APPOINTMENT

S.No	Person	Key Facts
1.	**Shri Revanth Reddy Garu** 	• Recently, appointed as **Chief Minister of Telangana** • He is the Second CM of Telangana after K. Chandrashekhar Rao • He belongs to the Indian National Congress party
2.	**Shri Pu. Lalduhoma** 	• Appointed as Chief Minister of Mizoram • He is the leader of the Zoram People's Movement (ZPM) o First leader not from MNF or Congress to hold this post in Mizoram.
3.	**Suresh Raina**	• Appointment as the **Youth Voter Awareness Ambassador** for the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

S.No	Book Title	Author and Key Facts
1.	**A Decade of Transformation: Signalling Power and Partnerships**	• **Authored by** - Captain M Doraibabu, Commander Amrut Dilip Godbole • The book was unveiled during the Navy Day celebration in Visakhapatnam, Andhra Pradesh.

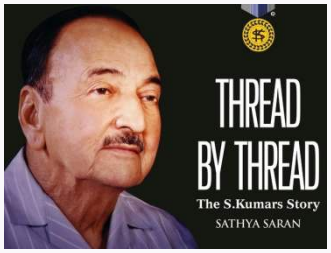
PERSONS IN NEWS

S.No	Personality	Key Facts
1.	**Muthiah Muralitharan** 	• Muralitharan was part of an **in-conversation session** during the **54th International Film Festival** of India in Goa ○ An upcoming **biopic** titled "**A Legendary 800 - Against all odds**" portrays his life, and Madhurr Mittal plays his role in the film • **Director** - Sripathy M **Do you know?** • Muralitharan's bowling average was over six wickets per Test match and took 800 Test wickets in his entire career
2.	**Andry Rajoelina** 	• He has been re-elected as the **President** of **Madagascar**. • This is Rajoelina's 3rd term as president
3.	**Bose Krishnamachari**	• **Why in News** - He is co-founder and president of Kochi-Muziris Biennale, has been recognized in Art Review's **'Power 100'** list of the world's most influential personalities in the field of art. • Ranked 38th on the 'Power 100' list by Art Review, an internationally renowned art magazine. • Noted for the progressive distinctiveness in his approaches to art.

		His works: ○ Curated the Neurodiverse project, an art show featuring neurodiverse artists. ○ Curated the murals on Manaveeyam street in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala. ○ Curated the Kerala Traditional Historical and Colonial Architecture photography exhibition. ○ Curated 'Contextual Cosmologies'. **About Art Review Magazine:** • Founded in 1949, • London-based magazine, is also published in Hong Kong • Power 100 List: An annual compilation by an international panel of art professionals since 2002 to recognize influential works in international art.
4.	**Leelavathi** 	• She has recently passed away. • She was a legendary **Kannada film** personality. **Awards:** • Dr. Rajkumar Lifetime Achievement Award by the Karnataka government. • Filmfare Award for Best Supporting Actress – Kannada: She won this award for her role in the movie "Kannadada Kanda" in 2006
5.	Andry Rajoelina 	• **Andry Rajoelina has been re-elected as the President of Madagascar**. • **About** Andry Rajoelina: ○ This marks his **third term as president.** He **first came to power in 2009** after **ousting Marc Ravalomanana in a coup backed by the army.** ○ Andry Rajoelina **won 59% of the vote**, defeating his **closest rivals Marc Ravalomanana** and **Siteny Randrianasoloniaiko.** ○ **Voter turnout of 46%** was the **lowest in the country's history**. ○ Rajoelina is 49-year-old **French-Malagasy entrepreneur** and **former DJ**. ○ There was **boycott and withdrawal of candidacies by 10 contenders** over concerns about the election's credibility. • But **names of the boycotting candidates remained on the ballot.**
6.	Henry Kissinger 	• Henry Kissinger, a **renowned American diplomat** and **Nobel Peace Prize winner**, **passed away at the age of 100.** • About Henry Kissinger: ○ **Born as Heinz Alfred Kissinger** in **Furth, Germany, in 1923**, he immigrated to the United States in 1938 to escape the Nazi regime. ○ **Became naturalized U.S. citizen** & **served in U.S. Army**. ○ He served as **United States Secretary of State** and **National Security Advisor** in the presidential administrations of **Richard Nixon and Gerald Ford between 1969 and 1977.** ○ Kissinger's **tenure was notable for several key international developments**: the **opening of diplomatic relations with China**, strategic **arms control talks with the Soviet Union**, promoting **peace in the Middle East**, and the **Paris Peace Accords with North Vietnam.** ○ Due to his **support to anti-communist regimes in Latin America** and his role in the **secret bombing of Cambodia**, his receipt of the **1973 Nobel Peace Prize was highly controversial.** • Book written at the age of 99 **"Leadership: Six Studies in World Strategy"**

		is based on Kissinger's interactions with six former leaders.

BOOKS AND AUTHORS

S.No	Book	Key Facts
1.	**Thread By Thread** 	• Book is authored by **Sathya Saran**, a noted journalist and author. • Publisher of the Book**: Penguin Random House.** • **About book:** ○ Book is **biography of Shambhu Kumar Kasliwal**, founder of S.Kumars, chronicling his **journey from a trader to a successful industrialist**. ○ **Tribute to Shambhu Kumar in 75th year of S.Kumars**, highlighting his contributions to the textile industry and his ethical business practices. ○ **Launched by Kapil Dev, a former brand ambassador for S.Kumars**. ○ **Shambhu Kumar pioneered Polyester Blends in India** and lived by the **motto "Best Possible Quality at the Lowest Possible Price."**

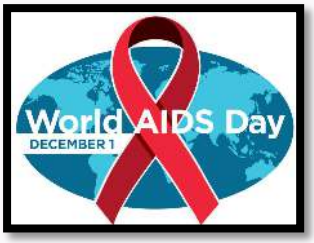
PLACES IN NEWS

S.No	Place	Key Facts
1.	**Subansiri Lower Hydroelectric Project**	• **Location** - Gerukamukh, Assam **Do you know?** • India's hydropower capacity is **47,000 MW**, which is 35% of the country's available hydro power potential. • India has become a world leader in energy transition, exceeding its commitment to make 40% of its capacity from non-fossil-fuel sources by 2030, achieving this target in 2021, nine years ahead of schedule. • India's per capita carbon emissions are 1/3rd of the global average, and its contribution to cumulative carbon load is just 3%, despite having 17% of the world's population.
2.	Angkor Wat 	• Angkor Wat has been **declared 8th wonder of the world, beating Italy's Pompeii** (Pompeii is a vast archaeological site in southern Italy). • About Angkor Wat: ○ It is a **temple complex in Cambodia's** northern **province of Siem Reap**, built by **Khmer King Suryavarman II in** the early **12th century**. ○ It covers an **area of about 400 square kilometers** it is and the **largest religious monument in the world.** ○ The temple **features five towers that represent Mount Meru**, the **home of the gods in Hindu** and **Buddhist cosmology.** ○ It was **originally a Hindu temple dedicated to Lord Vishnu, but later became a Buddhist temple.** ○ Angkor Wat is a **UNESCO World Heritage Site listed in 1992.** Upon inscription, the **site was listed as endangered** to ensure conservation; it was **removed from that list in 2004.**

DAYS IN NEWS

S.No	Days	Themes & Misc.

2.	**Samvidhan Diwas (Constitution Day)**	• It is celebrated on **26th November** every year.
		  ○ It is celebrated to commemorate the **adoption of the Constitution (1949)** of India and to honour the contributions of the Founding Fathers.
		Do you Know?
		• Indian Constitution came into **effect/force** on 26th January 1950
		Additional Information:
		• The **Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs** played a pivotal role in organizing the celebration of Samvidhan Diwas in 2023
		• The Ministry invited all citizens to participate in the Constitution Quiz and Online Reading of the Preamble.
		  ○ Two web portals were made operational for maximum participation, one for online reading of the Preamble in 22 Official Languages and English, and another for the online quiz titled "**Bharat: Loktantra Ki Janani**."

3.	**World AIDS Day** 	• Observed every year on **December 1** • **Theme – "Let Communities Lead"** **Do you know?** • The first case of HIV in India was identified in the year **1986** in Chennai, Tamil Nadu. • The Government of India established the National AIDS Committee under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare in 1986. • In **1992**, the government established the **National AIDS Control Organization (NACO)** to oversee policies related to HIV and AIDS, to oversee prevention and control programs, and to implement the National AIDS Control Program (NACP).
4.	**Navy Day**	• Observed every year on **December 4,** ○ To acknowledge the role of the Indian Navy and commemorate its achievements in '**Operation Trident**' during the 1971 Indo-Pak War • **Venue of Celebration** - Sindhudurg Fort, situated off the Maharashtra coast • **Theme** - Operational Efficiency, Readiness, and Mission Accomplishment in the Maritime Domain"

MISCELLANEOUS

S.No	News	Key Facts
1.	**International Film Festival of India (IFFI) 54, Goa**	• **Himachal Pradesh Police Orchestra** (Harmony of the Pines) performs at the closing ceremony of IFFI 54, Goa
2.	Cyclone '**Michaung**'	• Cyclone Michaung originated in the **Bay of Bengal** • The name 'Michaung' was proposed by **Myanmar**, symbolizing resilience and fortitude.

		• It is the 6th cyclone to develop in the Indian Ocean in 2023 and the 4th to form in the Bay of Bengal
3.	**"Garba of Gujarat" inscription as Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH)** 	• **Declared by** - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) • It was done under the provisions of the **2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage** during the **18th meeting of the Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage** from December, 2023 in Kasane, **Botswana** • The Listing mechanism under the UNESCO 2003 Convention **aims** to enhance the visibility of intangible cultural heritage, fostering awareness of its significance and promoting dialogue that respects cultural diversity. **Do you know?** • **Garba of Gujarat is** the **15th** ICH element from India to join this list, **other 14 are**: Ramlila (2008), Vedic chanting (2008), Kutiyattam - Sanskrit theatre (2008), Ramman (2009), Mudiyettu (2010), Kalbelia (2010), Chhau dance (2010), Buddhist chanting of Ladakh (2012), Sankirtana (2013), Traditional brass and copper craft of utensil making among the Thatheras of Jandiala Guru, Punjab, India (2014), Yoga (2016), Traditions of Nawruz (Parsi New Year) (2016), Kumbh Mela, North India (2017), Durga Puja, Kolkata (2021) **Additional Information:** • India was elected to be part of the **24 Member Inter-governmental Committee (IGC)** of the ICH 2003 Convention in 2022 for a tenure of 4 years. **About UNESCO:** • **Established –** 1945 • **HQ –** Paris, France • It has **195 member** states and **10 associate members.** • **It has 6 official languages:** Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian, and Spanish
4.	**Word of the Year for 2023**	• "rizz" • Recognised by **Oxford University** • As per **Oxford University Press**, this word stems from the shortened form of the word '**charisma**', taken from the middle part of the word, which is an unusual word formation pattern.
5.	**Word of the Year 2023**: **"Authentic"** has been chosen as the **word of the year by Merriam-Webster.**	• There was a **substantial increase in online searches for "authentic" this year due to discussions around AI** (artificial intelligence), celebrity culture, identity, and social media. • The **word's popularity grew as the distinction between "real" and "fake" became more ambiguous.** • The **AI boom contributed to this blurring**, especially in terms of the authenticity of text, images, and videos. • **"Deepfake" was among the runners-up**, a term referring to **videos and photos digitally altered with AI.** • **In 2022**, word of year was **"gaslighting**," a term used to **describe**

		manipulation causing someone to doubt their reality or beliefs. • 2023 marks Merriam-Webster's **20th anniversary choosing top word.** • **Merriam-Webster** is **oldest dictionary publisher in United States**. **In 1831**, George and Charles Merriam **founded** the company **as G & C Merriam Co. in Springfield, Massachusetts.**
6.	**Modernization of water supply services in Kochi**	• Launched by: **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** • The **ADB has approved a USD 170 million loan to modernize water supply services in Kochi**, a city in Kerala, India. • The loan **aims to improve urban living standards** of 2.5 million people in Kochi, **ensure clean water access**, and **boost climate resilience.** • **Project involves rehabilitation and upgrade of 5 water treatment plants** with production capacity of 325 million litres per day. • Project also includes **construction of new pipelines, reservoirs,** and **distribution networks** to increase water availability and quality. • The project is **part of ADB's Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) 2023-2027 for India**, which focuses on- o Accelerating **structural transformation** and **job creation** o Promoting **climate-resilient growth** o Deepening **social and economic inclusiveness.** • Project is in line with India's development priorities to be achieved by 2047 when the country marks 100 years of independence.

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2. ESI in News

PIB IN NEWS

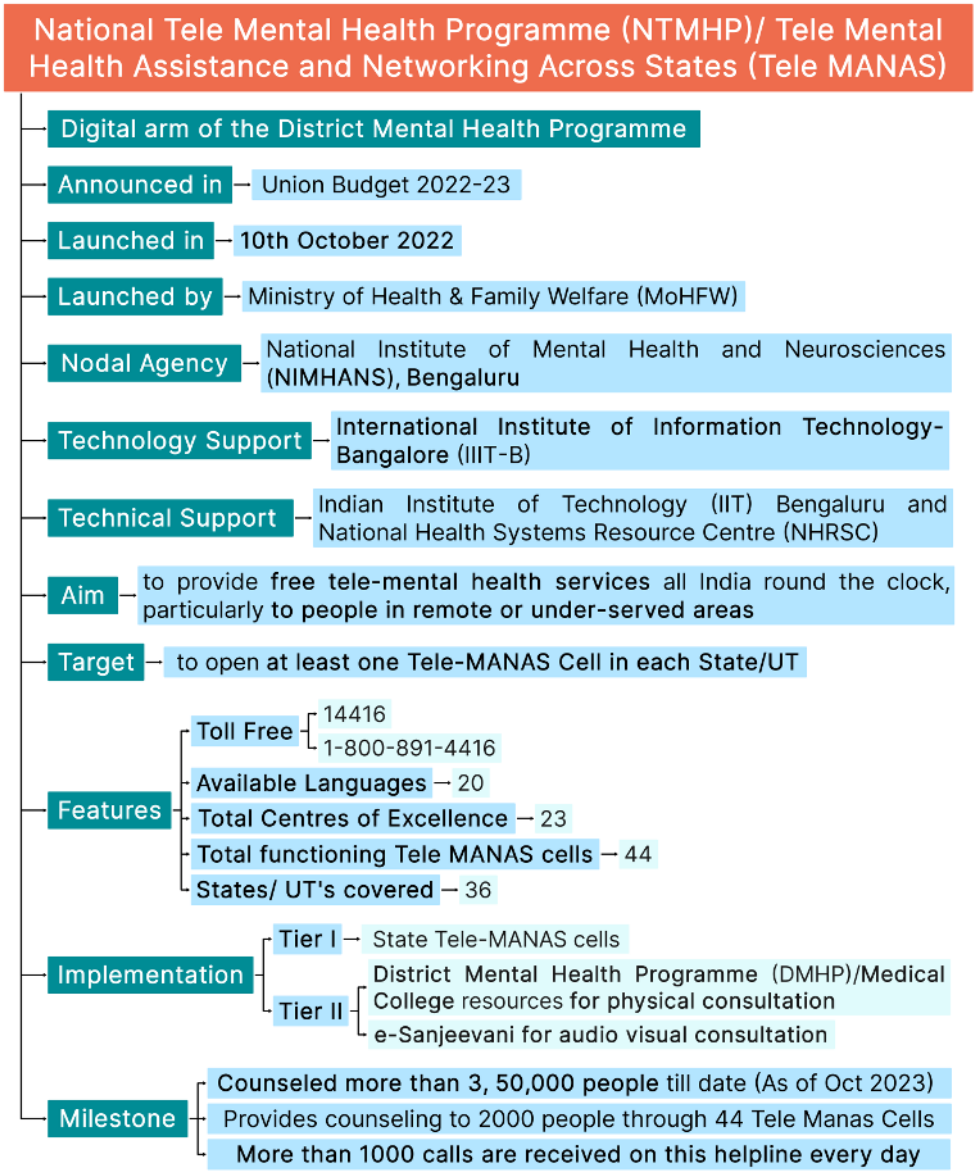
SOCIAL SECTOR IN INDIA- HEALTH

2.1 Tele MANAS Cell at AFMC, Pune

Why in News?

- Tele-Mental Health Assistance and Networking across States **(Tele MANAS) Cell** recently inaugurated **at the Armed Forces Medical College (AFMC) in Pune** by Chief of Defence Staff.
- A Memorandum of Understanding **(MoU) was signed between the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare and the Ministry of Defence.**
- **Armed forces personnel can access the service by calling the toll-free number 14416** from anywhere in the country.

About Tele MANAS



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT

2.2 Roadmap for Ethanol Blending in India

Why in news?

- The Minister of State for Petroleum and Natural Gas recently mentioned Roadmap for Ethanol Blending in India in Rajya sabha.

About Roadmap for Ethanol Blending in India

- The **National Policy of Biofuels- 2018** notified on June 4, 2018, **set targets of 20% ethanol blending in petrol** and **5% biodiesel blending in diesel by 2030.**

QuickFact

To meet ethanol blending targets measures taken includes: **expansion of feedstock for production of ethanol**; **administered price mechanism** for procurement of ethanol under the **Ethanol Blended Petrol (EBP) Programme**; **lowered GST rate to 5% on ethanol for EBP Programme.**

- The **Government advanced** these **targets to the Ethanol Supply Year (ESY) 2025-26.**
- An **estimated 1016 crore litres of ethanol is required** to achieve target by ESY 2025-26.
- India currently has an ethanol production capacity of 1364 crore litres, sufficient to meet these targets.
- Oil Marketing Companies **achieved 10% blending in ESY 2021-22** and **12% in ESY 2022-23.**

2.3 Waste to Energy Programme

Why in news?

- The **Union Minister for New & Renewable Energy and Power** recently **informed the details of Central Financial Assistance (CFA) disbursed under Waste to Energy Programme** during FY 2018-1, FY 2019-20, FY 2020-21, FY 2021-22, FY 2022-23, and FY 2023-24 (as on 30.11.2023) for setting up of Waste to Energy projects.
- **8 Biogas Development and Training Centres (BDTCs) have been established** at India's premier Institutions to provide Technical Assistance.

QuickFact

India has set an ambitious target of having 500 GW of installed renewable energy by 2030, which includes the installation of 280 GW of solar power and 140 GW of wind power.

About Waste to Energy Programme

- **Launch year: November, 2022**
- **Launched by: Ministry of New and Renewable Energy**
- **Implemented by: Ministry of New and Renewable Energy**
- **Objective:** to **support the setting up of Waste to Energy projects for** generation of Biogas/ **BioCNG/ Power/ producer or syngas** from urban, industrial and agricultural wastes/residues.
- **Features:**
  - **Budgetary outlay of Rs. 1715 Crore** to be implemented in two phases.
  - Supports Bioenergy plants by providing **Central financial assistance based on:**
    - ✓ **Inspection of the plants** for performance monitoring **for a minimum of 3 consecutive months** by designated inspection agencies
    - ✓ **Continuous operation of the plant for at least 72 hours**, during which plant must maintain an **average operational capacity of 80%** of its rated capacity.
    - ✓ Developers are required to **share generation data of the Waste to Energy plants to Ministry of New and Renewable Energy**
- Financial assistance available as follows:
  - **Biogas generation**: **Rs 0.25 Crore** per 12000cum/day
  - **BioCNG generation**: upto **Rs 4.0 Crore** per 4800 kg/day
  - **Power generation based on Biogas**: Upto **Rs 0.75** Crore/MW
  - **Power based on bio & agro-industrial waste** (other than MSW): **Rs 0.4 Crore**/MW
  - **Biomass Gasifier**: Upto **Rs. 15,000 per kWe**
- **Duration:** from **FY 2021-22** upto **FY 2025-26**

2.4 Renewable energy sector in India

Why in news?

- The Union Minister for New & Renewable Energy and Power recently informed about **steps and initiatives to promote and accelerate renewable energy capacity in country**.
- India has set the **target to achieve 500 GW** of installed electric capacity **from non-fossil sources by 2030.**

QuickFact

The **ISA was conceived jointly by India and France to mobilize efforts against climate change** through deployment of solar energy solutions, **on the sidelines of the 21st Conference of Parties (COP21) held in Paris in 2015**. All member states of the United Nations are eligible to join the ISA. **At present, 116 countries are signatories to the ISA Framework Agreement, of which 94 countries have submitted the necessary instruments of ratification** to become full members of the ISA.

Key Green initiatives

- Announcement of **structured bidding trajectory to invite bids for 50 GW of renewable energy capacity annually for the next 5 years** -from **FY 2023-24 till FY 2027-28**.
- Declaration of **trajectory for Renewable Purchase Obligation (RPO) up to the year 2030**.
- Release of the Procedure for Implementation of **Uniform Renewable Energy Tariff**.
- **Setting up of Ultra Mega Renewable Energy Parks** to provide land and transmission to RE developers on a plug and play basis.
- **Waiver of Inter State Transmission System (ISTS) charges for inter-State sale of solar and wind power** for projects to be commissioned by 30th June 2025.
- Launch of Production Linked Incentive **(PLI) Scheme for High Efficiency Solar PV Modules to strengthen local manufacturing.**
- Launch of **National Green Hydrogen Mission** with objective of **making India the Global Hub for production, usage and export of Green Hydrogen and its derivatives.**
- Permitting Foreign Direct Investment **(FDI) up to 100 percent under the automatic route.**
- The Government of India is providing an **assistance of Rs.100 crore per year to the International Solar Alliance (ISA) for the financial years 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25** to help energy transition, especially in developing and emerging economies.
    - **Preparing a global solar stocktake**, in parallel with the global stocktake being conducted by the UNFCCC **for laying the roadmap for achieving the Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs).**
    - Setting up of a **Global Solar Facility with a payment guarantee mechanism and an insurance premium support fund** to invest in decentralized solar projects in Africa.
    - Setting up of **STAR (Solar Technology Application Resource) centres in 5 countries in 2023 and upto 50 STAR centres by 2030** as hubs of capacity building activities in those countries.

2.5 Green Financing in India

Why in news?

- The Union Minister for New & Renewable Energy and Power recently informed about the **estimated the fund requirement for solar and wind generation projects during FY 2022 – 2032 as Rs. 20.67 lakh crore.**
- Most of the Renewable Energy projects in the country are being set up by private sector developers selected through a transparent bidding process.

Steps to encourage investment in renewable energy sector

- **Permitting Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) up to 100%** under the automatic route.
- **Liquidity Infusion Scheme to help Distribution Companies settle their debt** and **Electricity (Late Payment Surcharge & related matters) Rules, 2022** to encourage **timely payment of dues**, apart from the Revamped Distribution Sector Scheme;
- To ensure availability of **low-cost funds for Renewable Energy Projects**, Government of **India raised Sovereign Green Bonds of Rs.16, 000 crore** (approximately).
- Out of the proceeds of Sovereign Green Bonds, **Rs. 6,186 crores was dedicated for renewable energy.**
- Indian Renewable Energy Development Agency **(IREDA) has raised $ 300 million via 'Green Masala Bonds' at the London Stock Echange (LSE).** These bonds had a tenor of 5 years and matured in October, 2022.

QuickFact

- **Green bonds (popularly known as climate bonds)** are **fixed interest-bearing financial instruments** issued by any sovereign entity or corporation or inter-governmental organisation.
- **Proceeds of these bonds** are used only **for environmentally conscious, climate-resilient projects**. RBI recently auctioned its maiden sovereign green bonds worth ₹8,000 crore. These comprised sovereign green bonds **2028** and sovereign green bonds **2033.**

SOCIAL JUSTICE

2.6 Launch of 'Guide on Gender-Inclusive Communication'

Why in news?

- **Minister of Women and Child Development** (MWCD) recently **launched a 'Guide on Gender-Inclusive Communication'** in Vigyan Bhawan, New Delhi.

About Guide on Gender-Inclusive Communication

- **Launch year: 28th November 2023**
- **Launched by: Ministry of Women and Child Development**
- **Developed by: Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration** (LBSNAA), **UN WOMEN**, and **Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation.**
- **Objective:**
  - To **provide recommendations for using gender-inclusive language** and **avoid gender bias** or **stereotypes in communication.**
  - To **heighten awareness, empower individuals to navigate daily communications** with a commitment to gender neutrality and inclusivity.

  - To fundamentally **reshape the narrative towards a society where language becomes an agent for positive change.**
- **Features:**
  - It **covers the use of language in English, Hindi,** and other **Regional languages.**
  - It is **based on the "Handbook on Combatting Gender Stereotypes" by Supreme Court of India** and other national and global best practices customized to suit the requirements of the Indian citizens.
  - **Includes a checklist for revisions, examples,** and **resources** for gender-inclusive communication.
  - It is **intended to assist in gender-inclusive writing, review, and translation of documents and communications by** government **officials, civil servants, media professionals, educators**, and other stakeholders.
- **Significance:** By highlighting and acknowledging implicit biases present in everyday language, the **guide can serve as a catalyst for change.**

2.7 Features of eSHRAM Portal

Why in news?

- Union Minister of State for Labour and Employment recently gave updates about the eShram registrations and features of the portal.
- **Total registration as on 29th Nov 2023 stood at 29.20 Crore** with **highest** registration in the state of **Uttar Pradesh of about 8.31 crore.**

About eShram portal

- **Launch year**: 26 August **2021**
- **Launched by**: **Ministry of Labour and Employment**
- **Aim:** to create a **centralised database of Unorganized Workers** which will help **to implement the social security services to them** and **share their information with various stakeholders for delivering the welfare schemes.**
- **Salient features** and **new development on eShram portal**:
  - The **registration in the portal is fully Aadhaar verified and Aadhaar seeded.**
  - Any **unorganised worker under 400 occupations in 30 broad occupation sectors** can register himself or herself on the portal on a **self-declaration basis.**
  - **Provision** has been added **to capture family details of migrant workers**.
  - **Provision** has been added **to share construction workers' data with States/UTs** to facilitate their registration in respective Building and other Construction Workers (BoCW) boards.
  - The eShram has been **integrated with National Career Service (NCS) Portal.** An **unorganised worker can register on NCS** using his/ her Universal Account Number (UAN) and **search for suitable job opportunities.**
  - The eShram is **also integrated with Pradhan Mantri Shram-yogi Maandhan (PM-SYM)**. PM-SYM is a **pension scheme for unorganised workers who are aged between 18-40 years.**
  - To provide **skill enhancement and apprenticeship opportunities** to unorganised worker, eShram has been **integrated with Skill India Digital portal** of Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.

- Also **integrated with myScheme portal**, a National Platform that **helps the citizen to find the right Government schemes for them.** It also **guides on how to apply for different Government schemes.** Through this integration, all the e Shram registrants can check the schemes for which they are eligible.

GLOBALIZATION

2.8 Garba makes it to UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage list

Why in news?

- **Garba, a traditional dance form from Gujarat**, recently **included in the UNESCO list of Intangible Cultural Heritage.**
- This **recognition makes Garba the 15th cultural item from India to be featured** on the UNESCO list, following Kolkata's Durga Puja, which was added two years ago.

About UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH)

- ICH means the **practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, skills** – as well as the **instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated with** them that individuals, groups, communities recognize as a part of their cultural heritage.
- Its **importance is not in cultural manifestation** itself, but in **wealth of knowledge, know-how and skills that are transmitted from one generation to next.**
- **'Convention for the Safeguarding of the ICH' adopted by UNESCO in 2003** was a crucial step towards preserving intangible heritage.
- **UNESCO's list of Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity was established in 2008.**
- As per **criteria for the selection**, the **entity must be-**
  - **Recognized by individuals, groups, communities as their cultural heritage.**
  - **Transmitted from generation to generation** and **be constantly recreated** by in response to their environment, interaction with nature and their history.
  - **Provide them with a sense of identity** and **continuity**, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity
- **Sangeet Natak Akademi is nodal organisation looks after and files nominations of intangible cultural entities from India**, for evaluation by UNESCO.

QuickFact

ICG from India include **Kolkata's Durga Puja** (2021), **Kumbh Mela** (2017), **Navroz** (2016), **Yoga** (2016), **Craft of Thatheras of Jandiala Guru of Punjab** (2014), musical performance **Sankirtana of Manipur** (2013), and **Buddhist chanting of Ladakh** (2012).

Before 2011, list included **Chhau dance of Assam**, **Kalbelia** folk songs and dance **of Rajasthan**, and **Mudiyettu**, a dance drama from **Kerala** (2010), **Ramman**, a religious festival and theatre performance **of Garhwal in the Himalayas** (2009), and **Kutiyattam or Sanskrit theatre**, and **Vedic chanting** (2008). **Ramlila**, a traditional performance of Ramayana, was also included in 2008.

2.9 India re-elected to International Maritime Organisation

Why in news?

- In elections held at its assembly **for the 2024–25 period**, **India was re-elected to the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Council** with the highest tally.

- **India's re-election falls under the Category of 10 states with "the largest interest in international seaborne trade"**, alongside Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Spain, Sweden, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE).

About International Maritime Organisation (IMO)

- **Establishment:**
  - In **1948 an international conference in Geneva adopted a convention formally establishing IMO.**
  - **IMO Convention entered into force in 1958** and in 1959 it met for first time.
  - **The original name was** the **Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization**, (IMCO), but the name was **changed in 1982 to IMO**.
- **Mandate**: It is the leading authority that **regulates the maritime industry**, which **supports global trade, transportation,** and **all marine operations.**
- **Objectives:**
  - To **provide machinery for cooperation among Governments in field of regulation and practices relating to** technical matters affecting **international trade shipping.**
  - To **encourage and facilitate adoption of standards in - maritime safety, efficiency of navigation** and **prevention and control of marine pollution** from ships.
- **Organizational Structure:**
  - **Assembly**: It is the **highest Governing Body of the Organization**. It consists of all **Member States** and it **meets once every two years** in regular sessions
  - **Council:** It is **elected by the Assembly for two-year terms** beginning after each regular session of the Assembly. It is **Executive Organ of IMO** responsible for **supervising the work of the Organization**.
  - **Five main Committees**: the **Maritime Safety** Committee; **Marine Environment Protection** Committee; **Legal** Committee; **Technical Cooperation** Committee and **Facilitation** Committee.
  - **Number of Sub-Committees:** to **support** the work of the **main technical committees**.
  - **Secretariat:** is **composed of employees who are representative of the organization's members** and a **Secretary-General** who is periodically **elected by the assembly**.

QuickFact

The Amrit Kaal Vision 2047 goals to strengthen India's global maritime presence like - dedicated IMO cell in India, appointment of a permanent representative at IMO headquarters, London.

- **Headquartered** in **London, United Kingdom**
- **Membership: 175 Member States** and **3 Associate Members.**

2.10 India elected to Executive Committee of Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC)

Why in news?

- **India's unanimously elected to the Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) representing the Asian region** during its **46th meeting** at FAO Headquarters in Rome.

- **Executive committee supports in management of commission's programme of standards development by conducting a "critical review" of proposals** to undertake work and monitors the progress of standards development.
- **The committee comprises the chair**, **3 vice chairs**, **6 regional coordinators** and **7 elected representatives** from various geographical regions of Codex.
- **India's proposal for setting global standards for millets was accepted by the Commission**, marking a significant initiative by India in establishing global food standards.

About Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC)

- **Establishment:**
  - It is an **international food standards body, established in 1961**.
  - **Joined by** the World Health Organization **(WHO) in June 1962**, held its **first session in Rome in October 1963**.
- **Mandate:** It has been **responsible for the implementation of the Joint FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme** OR **Codex Standards.**
  - Developed by Regional Coordinating Committees, **applicable to specific regions.**
  - **Covers all foods**, **standards for specific foods**, **food labeling**, **food hygiene**, food **additives** and **pesticide residues**, and procedures for assessing the safety of foods derived from modern biotechnology.
  - **Used as reference standards for international trade and resolving trade disputes.**
- **Aim/Objective:** To **develop** and **endorse food standards, guidelines, codes of practice contributing to safety, quality** and **fairness of international food trade.**
- **Membership: Comprises 189 members;** including **188 countries** and 1 Member Organization (**The European Union**).**India has been a member since 1964.**
- **Significance:**
  - Recognized by the **WTO's Agreement on Application of Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS).**
  - **Plays a pivotal role in setting global food standards**, ensuring food safety and quality, and facilitating international trade.

2.11 4th edition of the ASEAN India Grassroots Innovation Forum (AIGIF)

Why in news?

- **2 grassroots innovators** and **1 student innovator from India won prizes** in grassroots innovation and student innovation competition respectively **at 4th edition AIGIF**.

QuickFact

Past editions were held in **Jakarta, Indonesia (2018), Davao, Philippines (2019)**, and **Phnom Penh, Cambodia (2022)**.

About 4th edition of AIGIF 2023

- **Launch year**: **launched in Langkawi, Malaysia** on 28th **November 2023.**
- **Launched by**: **Minister of Science, Technology and Innovation**, Malaysia
- **Key Objective**:
  - To **foster strengthened relationship between India and AMS through cooperation in** Science, Technology and Innovation **(STI)**

  - To **give exposure to social innovations** in different countries and also **strengthens governance in the grassroots innovation ecosystem**
- **Collaboration between** :
  - **ASEAN Committee on Science, Technology, and Innovation (COSTI)**
  - **Department of Science & Technology (DST)**, Government of **India**
  - **National Innovation Foundation (NIF)** – **India**
  - **Malaysia's Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation (MOSTI)** in the year 2023 (**Science and Technology Ministry of the host nation**)
  - **Yayasan Inovasi Malaysia (YIM) is an agency under MOSTI** which is **executing the AIGIF this year.**
- **Features:**
  - It is **year-on-year flagship programme to serve as a dynamic platform for showcasing and promoting innovations** that have the potential to significantly impact lives at the grassroots level.
  - It **also supports the cross-border mechanisms, information sharing of best practices and networking of ASEAN linkages to global and regional networks** to improve their innovation and technology capability, entrepreneurs' resilience, and sustainability.
  - It encompasses speaker sessions, panel discussions, exhibition of innovations, and **two innovation competitions** – **Grassroots innovation** and **Student innovation where a total of 11 countries** – India and 10 AMS participated.
- **Significance**: It creates **opportunities for students and the grassroots population in each of the participating countries** to learn something new every year.

2.12 Review of the India-U.S. CEO Forum

Why in news?

- The **India-U.S. CEO Forum** was recently virtually **reviewed by India's Minister of Commerce and Industry** and **U.S. Secretary of Commerce**, highlighting the deepening commercial ties between the two nations.
- **Welcomed industry-led initiatives** such as **NIHIT** (www.nihit.org), a nationwide **capacity-building endeavour for small businesses, startups,** and **MSMEs** and **FIST (Framework for Integrity, Security and Trust)**
- Inclusion of 7 new CEOs to the US section of the Forum who will serve alongside the existing CEO members **Honeywell, Pfizer, Kyndryl** and **Viasat joined the Forum**.

About India-U.S. CEO Forum

- It comprises **CEOs from leading Indian** and **US-based companies.**
- **Co-chaired by N Chandrasekaran**, Chairman of Tata Sons and **James Taiclet**, President and Chief Executive Officer, Lockheed Martin
- It **acts as an advisory private sector body to India-US Commercial Dialogue**.
- This marks the **8th convening of the Forum since its reconstitution in December 2014**, and it represents the **first review of the Forum initiatives' progress in the middle of the year**.

2.13 "Adopt a Heritage 2.0" Program

Why in News?

- The **"Adopt a Heritage 2.0" program** recently **announced the deadline for application submissions, which is set for December 31, 2023.**
- The program has received interest from various sectors for participation and contribution.

Maintenance of ancient monuments and archaeological sites and **remains of national importance is the prime concern of the ASI.**
It **regulates all archaeological activities** in the country as per provisions of **Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Sites and Remains Act, 1958**. It also

About "Adopt a Heritage 2.0" program

- **Launch year**: in September 4, **2023.**
- **Nodal Ministry**: The **Ministry of Culture**
- **Launched by**: **Archaeological Survey of India** (ASI)
- **Implementing Agency**: **ASI**
- **Aim:** to **collaborate with private/public sector entities for the development and maintenance of amenities at centrally protected monuments.**
- **Features:**
  - **Involves CSR funding** from private/public sector companies, trusts, societies, NGOs **to support heritage sites.**
  - It is a **revamped version of the earlier scheme launched in 2017** and **clearly defines the amenities sought** for different monuments as per AMASR Act 1958.
  - The **stakeholders can apply for adopting a monument or specific amenities at a monument through** a dedicated web portal with **URL www.indianheritage.gov.in.**
  - The selected stakeholders will develop, **provide and maintain amenities in hygiene, accessibility, safety and knowledge categories.**
  - An opportunity to be recognized as a **responsible and heritage-friendly entity.**
  - The **term of the appointment will be for a period of five years** initially, which may be
  - further **extended up to five years.**

2.14 "Jago Grahak Jago" campaign

Why in news?

- The Department of Consumer Affairs is highlighted recently for conducting the "Jago Grahak Jago" multimedia awareness campaigns nationwide.

About "Jago Grahak Jago" Campaign

- **Launch Year: 2005**
- **Nodal Ministry:** the **Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution**
- **Implementing Agency:** the **Department of Consumer Affairs.**
- **Aim:** To **educate consumers about their rights** and **mechanisms for redressal of grievances.**
- **Features:**
  - The campaign **utilizes various mediums** such as print, TV, radio, cinema, websites, and hoardings to reach a wide audience.
  - Special efforts are made to **reach people in rural and backward areas through participation in fairs and festivals.**

QuickFact

Consumer Protection Act, 2019 provides institutional mechanism to protect cosumer rights.

The Department of Consumer Affairs has:

- Set up **National Consumer Helpline (NCH)** & **www.consumerhelpline.gov.in** website as a central registry for lodging consumer grievances.
- **Scheme 'Computerization and Computer Networking of Consumer Commissions (CONFONET)'**- to fully computerize Consumer Commissions.
- **Online complaint application portal** named "**edaakhil.nic.in**" developed in 35 States/UTs of the Country.

- **Grant-in-Aid is provided to States/UTs** for localized consumer awareness activities.
- **Using social media to generate awareness of consumers** through creatives/ captions on consumer rights and redressal mechanisms.
- **The digital social media channels are being professionally managed** and creative content for consumer awareness and protection of consumer rights is posted.
- **"Jagriti", a mascot for empowering consumers** and **generating awareness** of their rights has also been launched by the Department.

2.15 Mission Amrit Sarovar

Why in News?

- Mission Amrit Sarovar is **highlighted for its significant role in water conservation and sustainable infrastructural development** across India.
- **As of November 2023**, number of **sites identified are 1, 09, 901** with **over 83,000 works have commenced** and **completion of over 68,000.**
- Notable progress seen in Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, and Jharkhand.

Mission Amrit Sarovar

- **Launch Year**: 24th April, **2022**
- **Aim/Objective**: To **develop/rejuvenate 75 water bodies per district, aiming for a total of 50,000 across India.**
- **Ministries Involved**: Ministry of Rural Development, Ministry of Jal Shakti, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Panchayati Raj, Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change.
- **Other Stakeholders**:
  - Bhaskaracharya National Institute for Space Applications and Geo-informatics **(BISAG-N) roped in as technical partner.**
  - **Ministry of Railways, Ministry of Road Transport & Highways** and other public agencies engaged for infrastructure project development are also **engaged in the Mission for the purpose of use of soil/silt excavated out of the Amrit Sarovar.**
- **Implementing Agency**: **States and Districts**, through convergence with various central and state government schemes.
- **Features**:
  - Convergence from **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme**, **15th Finance Commission Grants**, **Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchayee Yojana sub schemes** such as Watershed Development Component, Har Khet ko Pani.
  - Corporate Social Responsibility **(CSR) funds to be deployed.**
  - **'Jan Bhagidari' is at heart**: Mobilization of citizen and non-government resources with the involvement of local heroes and citizens.
  - **Foundation stone of Amrit Sarovar laid by freedom fighters and families of martyrs** or Padma awardees or the oldest person of the gram panchayat.
  - Every Amrit Sarovar has **pondage area of at least 1 acre with a water holding capacity of about 10,000 cubic metres.**
  - Every Amrit Sarovar **will be surrounded by trees like Neem, Peepal and Banyan etc.**
- **Targets**: Completion of **50,000 Amrit Sarovars by August 15, 2023.**

2.16 'Digital Life Certificate (DLC) Campaign 2.0'

Why in News?

- Nation-wide Digital Life Certificate **(DLC) Campaign 2.0 successfully concluded recently.**
- **1.15 crore DLC's were generated** - **38.47 lakh DLC's for Central** Government Pensioners, **16.15 lakh for State** Government Pensioners and **50.91 lakh for EPFO** Pensioners
- **Adoption of Face Authentication Technology by 9.65 lakh pensioners.**
- Significant **participation from senior pensioners, with over 24,000 above the age of 90 using the digital mode.**
- **Leading states** in DLC generation were **Maharashtra, Uttar Pradesh, and West Bengal.**

TRIVIA

DoPPW has been promoting **Digital Life Certificate (DLC) or Jeevan Pramaan** ever **since submission of DLCs using biometric devices was commenced in 2014.**
1st DLC campaign was launched in the month of **November 2022 in 37 cities** throughout the country. It was a huge **success with more than 35 lakh**

Digital Life Certificate (DLC) Campaign 2.0:

- **Launch year: 1st November 2023**
- Aim:
  - **To digitally empower pensioners** and simplify life certificate submission process.
  - **To promote the use of DLC/Face Authentication technology** for the submission of Digital Life Certificates.
- **Organised by**: **Department of Pension and Pensioners Welfare (DoPPW)** in collaboration with 17 Pension Disbursing Banks, Ministries/Departments, Pensioners' Welfare Associations, UIDAI, and MeitY.
- **Timeline: 1st November to 30th November, 2023**
- **Target: 50 lakh DLCs of Central Government Pensioners.**
- **Coverage:** Conducted in **100 cities at 597** (earlier planned 500) **locations across India.**
- **Key features:**
  - Use of Face Authentication Technology and detailed guidelines for stakeholders.
  - **Outreach to pensioners in remote locations** through home and hospital visits.
  - The **leading Banks for DLC generation** are **State Bank of India** and **Punjab National Bank**, the leading Pension Disbursing Banks, **with 7.68 and 2.38 DLCs respectively**.
  - **Educational efforts to help pensioners understand the process** for future use.
  - 297 Nodal Officers and 44 Pensioner Welfare Associations led the campaign.

2.17 eCourts Mission Mode Project

Why in News?

- The **eCourts Mission Mode Project**, part of the National eGovernance Plan, **recently highlighted by Minister of State Ministry for Law &**

QuickFact

The **District and Taluka Court Complexes covered in Phase-I from 2007 computerized** with installation of hardware, LAN and Case Information Software (CIS).
The **Phase-II since 2014 lays great emphasis on service delivery to the litigants, lawyers and other stakeholders**. The websites will be Accessible Compliant and to the extent possible, the information will be available in the local

Justice during the approval of eCourts Phase-III and budget allocation.

About eCourts Mission Mode Project

- **Launch Year: 2007**
- **Ministry Involved: Ministry of Law & Justice, Government of India**
- **Implementing Agency:** Implemented under the **joint partnership of Department of Justice,** Ministry of Law & Justice, Government of India and **eCommittee, Supreme Court of India.**
- **Aim/Objective:** To **ICT enable courts**, improving judicial productivity and **making justice delivery system more accessible** and **efficient.**
- **Features of Phase III:**
  - **Approved by the eCommittee,** Supreme Court of India in **October 2022** and by **Union Cabinet in September 2023.**
  - Comprehensive **digitization and cloud migration.**
  - **AI based intelligent systems** for decision-making.
  - **Unified technology platform** for the judiciary.
  - Environment-friendly **practices reducing paper use.**
  - **Virtual court participation**
  - Approved with a **budget of Rs.7210 crore.**
  - **Tenure/Timeline: Four years** (2023 onwards) for Phase-III.

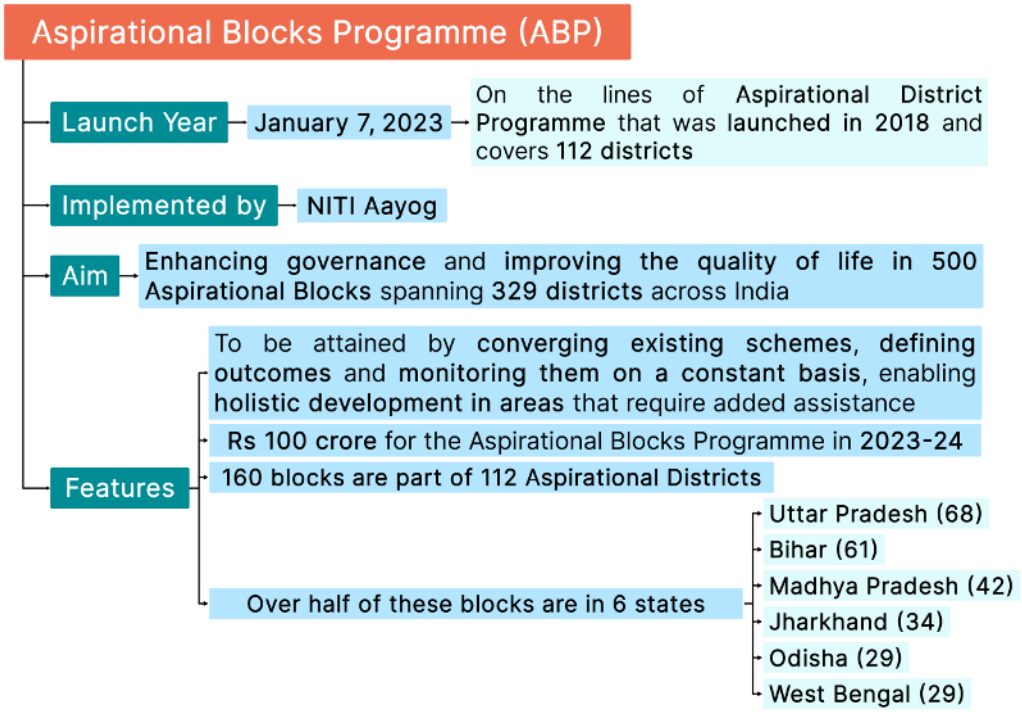
2.18 First Delta Ranking of Aspirational Blocks Programme (ABP) by NITI Aayog

Why in news?

- **NITI Aayog recently announced the first delta rankings of the Aspirational Blocks Programme (ABP).**
- **Tiryani Block** of **Kumaram Bheem Asifabad District, Telangana** secured the **top position** and **Kaushambi block of Kaushambi District, Uttar Pradesh ranking second**.
- **Rankings based on the performance and progress achieved in Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)**. **40 KPIs grouped into 5 themes** to measure progress.
- **500 Aspirational Blocks** ranked based upon the **improvements in KPIs from** baseline data of **March 31, 2023** and of the first quarter on **June 30, 2023.**
- The **Aspirational Districts Programme (ADP) rankings for October 2023 were also announced**, with **Rayagada (Odisha)** ranked **1st** and **Jamui (Bihar)** ranked **2nd**.
- Vice Chairman along with Members of NITI Aayog inaugurated the Wall of Fame.
  - **Highlights milestones of ABP & ADP** with vision to create Viksit Bharat by 2047.
  - It **celebrates the achievements of the best performing Aspirational Blocks** and **Aspirational Districts** in country.
  - It also **showcases story of social impact created by ABP & ADP** in empowering, uplifting, and transforming lives.
- **Blocks divided into six zones, with two blocks from each zone ranked.**
- **Winners in each zonal category** receive **prize amounts of Rs. 1.5 crores** for the top rank and **Rs. 1 crore** for the second rank.

Zone	Region	First Position	Second Position
Zone 1	Hilly and North-eastern States, Islands	Amri block, West Karbi Anglong, Assam	Ngopa block, Saitual Mizoram
Zone 2	Northern Indian States	Harraiya block, Basti, Uttar Pradesh	Virno block, Ghazipur, Uttar Pradesh
Zone 3	Southern States	Maski block, Raichur, Karnataka	Narnoor, Adilabad, Telangana
Zone 4	Western Indian States	Sironcha, Gadhichiroli district, Maharashtra	Aheri, Gadhichiroli district, Maharashtra
Zone 5	Central India	Tirla block, Dhar district, Madhya Pradesh	Pati block, Barwani District, Madhya Pradesh
Zone 6	Eastern India	Andar, Siwan, Bihar	Ramgarh, Dumka, Jharkhand

About Aspirational Blocks Programme (ABP)



2.19 Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain (JSA: CTR) Campaign

Why in news?

- **Minister of State for Jal Shakti recently gave the updates** on Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain (JSA: CTR) campaign.
- **All State Governments/UTs requested to create inventory of all water bodies** and **to upload the same on JSA: CTR portal.**
- Also been advised to prepare **scientific water conservation plan for each district.**
- **For 519 districts of the country the GIS based Water Conservation Plans** have been prepared.

About Jal Shakti Abhiyan: Catch the Rain (JSA: CTR) campaign

- **Launch year: 2019**
- **Launched by: Ministry of Jal Shakti**
- **Implemented by: National Water Mission**
- **Aim: Jan Andolan to initiate water conservation at the grass-root level** through citizen participation to accelerate water conservation across the country.
- Focus on **5 key intervention areas**: water conservation and rainwater harvesting, renovation of traditional and other water bodies/tanks, reuse and recharge of bore well structures, watershed development, and intensive afforestation.
- It was **started in 2019 in 256 water-stressed districts** and **later on in 2021 & 2022** expanded at the **pan-India level.**
- **JSA: CTR - 2023 campaign launched on 4th March 2023** is 4th in series with the **focus on 150 Water Stressed Districts.**

2.20 Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs)

Why in news?

- Union Minister of **State for Rural Development recently informed about** the development of the **RSETIs.**
- **At present 591 RSETIs are functioning across 577 districts** in the country.

About Rural Self Employment Training Institutes (RSETIs)

- RSETIs are **district-level Rural Self Employment Training Institutes**.
- **Managed by** the **banks** and **funded by Ministry of Rural Development (MoRD).**
- Function:
    - RSEITs **provide free of cost skill training** and **credit assistance to rural unemployed youth** in the age group of **18-45 years.**
    - RSETIs **provide mentorship with the purpose of promoting self-employment** among rural poor in order to enhance their livelihood opportunities and mitigate hardships.
    - **Welfare of marginalized sections like SCs, STs and OBCs is taken care by way of training** the poor rural unemployed youth free of cost and by ensuring settlement of the trained candidates for taking up self-employment ventures by extending necessary support.

INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENTS IN INDIA

2.21 First Meeting of National Traders' Welfare Board (NTWB)

Why in news?

- The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (**DPIIT) recently held the first meeting of the National Traders' Welfare Board (NTWB)**.

About National Traders' Welfare Board

- **DPIIT set up the board in 2019**
- **Objectives**:

- To **identify policy measures to achieve the objective of welfare of traders and their employees.**
- To **suggest simplifications in the Acts and Rules** applicable to traders.
- To **make recommendations to reduce the compliance burden** of traders.
- To **improve access to funds** for traders.
- To **make recommendations regarding social security** benefits like insurance, pension, healthcare etc., for traders and their employees.

- **Board Composition**:
  - **One Chairperson** (Non-Official)
  - **Up to 5 members** (Non-Official) having special knowledge of matters relating to the technical or other aspects of retail trade
  - **Up to 10 members** (Non-Official) **representing Trade Associations.**
  - **One Non-Official member representing each State and Union Territory**
  - **9 Ex-officio representatives** from Ministries/Departments.
  - **Joint Secretary, DPIIT (dealing with Internal Trade) shall be the Convener of the Board.**

3. GA + FINANCE

PRIMARY AND SECONDARY MARKET

2.22 SEBI Complaint Redressal (SCORES) Platform

Why in news?

- The **Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI)** has **recently extended the timeline for** implementation of **linking** SEBI Complaint Redressal **(SCORES) with the online dispute resolution platform to April 1, 2024.**
- **Earlier, the deadline** for linking both the platforms **was December 4.**
- In September, SEBI had issued a circular saying that market entities will need to apply for SCORES authentication and for Application Programming Interface (API) integration.

About SEBI Complaint Redressal (SCORES) Platform

- **Launch year:** in **2011**
- **Launched by**: the **Securities and Exchange Board of India**
- **Aim:** to **provide a facilitative platform for investors to file their unresolved grievances against listed companies or registered intermediaries**
- **Features:**
  - **Reduce the timelines** and **introduce automatic routing** as well as **automatic escalation of complaints.**

- **In September, the regulator had disposed of 3,705 complaints** against companies and market intermediaries through the SCORES platform.
- The data showed that **only 17 complaints were pending with it for three months**. The **average resolution time was about 40 days.**

Quick Revision

- **Tele MANAS Cell at the Armed Forces Medical College (AFMC) in Pune. Armed forces personnel can access the service by calling the toll-free number 14416. Tele MANAS launched in 10th October 2022 to provide free mental health services.**
- **Targets of 20% ethanol blending in petrol and 5% biodiesel blending in diesel by 2030 advanced by Government to the Ethanol Supply Year (ESY) 2025-26**
- **Waste to Energy Programme Launched by: Ministry of New and Renewable Energy in November, 2022 to support the setting up of Waste to Energy projects for generation of Biogas/ BioCNG/ Power/ producer or syngas from urban, industrial and agricultural wastes/residues.**
- **The Government of India is providing an assistance of Rs.100 crore per year to the International Solar Alliance (ISA) for the financial years 2022-23, 2023-24 and 2024-25.**
- **Estimated fund requirement for solar and wind generation projects during FY 2022 – 2032 as Rs. 20.67 lakh crore.**
- **Guide on Gender-Inclusive Communication launched in 28th November 2023 by: Ministry of Women and Child Development. Developed by Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration (LBSNAA), UN WOMEN, and Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation. To provide recommendations for using gender-inclusive language and avoid gender bias or stereotypes in communication.**
- **Total registration as on 29th Nov 2023 stood at 29.20 Crore with highest registration in the state of Uttar Pradesh of about 8.31 crore. The eShram was launched in August 2021 by Ministry of Labour and Employment to create a centralised database of Unorganized Workers.**
- **As per 'Convention for the Safeguarding of the ICH' adopted by UNESCO in 2003, Garba, a traditional dance form from Gujarat, recently included in the UNESCO list of Intangible Cultural Heritage.**
- **London based IMO set up in 1948 is the UN specialized agency that regulates the maritime industry. India was re-elected to IMO Council for 2024–25 period.**
- **India's elected to Executive Committee of the Codex Alimentarius Commission (CAC) representing the Asian region. India will support in management of commission's programme of standards development. CAC is an international food standards body, established in 1961.**
- **It comprises CEOs from leading Indian and US-based companies.**
- **Co-chaired by N Chandrasekaran, Chairman of Tata Sons and James Taiclet, President and Chief Executive Officer, Lockheed Martin**
- **India-U.S. CEO Forum set up in 2014 acts as an advisory private sector body to India-US Commercial Dialogue.**
- **The "Adopt a Heritage 2.0" program recently announced the deadline for application submissions, which is set for December 31, 2023. Under aegis of ASI, aimed to collaborate with private/public sector entities for the development and maintenance of amenities at centrally protected monuments.**
- **In 2005 "Jago Grahak Jago" multimedia awareness campaigns launched nationwide by the Department of Consumer Affairs. It educates consumers about their rights and mechanisms for redressal of grievances.**
- **Mission Amrit Sarovar launched in 24th April, 2022 to develop/rejuvenate 75 water bodies per district,**

aiming for a total of 50,000 across India. As of Nov 2023 over 68,000 water bodies covered.

- Nation-wide Digital Life Certificate (DLC) Campaign 2.0 during 1st -30th Nov. 1.15 crore DLC's were generated - 38.47 lakh DLC's for Central Government Pensioners, 16.15 lakh for State Government Pensioners and 50.91 lakh for EPFO Pensioners. Adoption of Face Authentication Technology by 9.65 lakh pensioners.
- NITI Aayog announced the first delta rankings of the Aspirational Blocks Programme (ABP). Tiryani Block of Kumaram Bheem Asifabad District, Telangana secured the top position and Kaushambi block of Kaushambi District, Uttar Pradesh ranking second.
- The Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade (DPIIT) recently held the first meeting of the National Traders' Welfare Board (NTWB). DPIIT set up the board in 2019 to identify policy measures to achieve welfare of traders and their employees.
- SEBI Complaint Redressal (SCORES) Platform launched in 2011 to provide a facilitative platform for investors to file their unresolved grievances against listed companies or registered intermediaries

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